

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, OVIP, JA

SUBJECT: MINISTER OF LABOR'S WASHINGTON VISIT

REF: TOKYO 8642

1. IN FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH LABATT MAY 16 OF MINISTER FUJII'S MEETING WITH SECRETARY MARSHALL, DEPUTY VICE MINISTER IWATA LISTED SUBJECTS FUJII PLANS TO RAISE: (A) POSSIBILITY OF U.S. RETURN TO ILO; (B) DISCUSSION OF UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION IN BOTH COUNTRIES; (C) CURRENT U.S. RESEARCH IN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH FIELD PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO TOXIC SUBSTANCES; (D) BILATERAL TRADE PROBLEMS AND VALUE OF EXPANDING BOTH USG AND GOJ LABOR UNION EXCHANGE PROGRAMS AS ONE MEANS OF OVERCOMING THEM; AND (E) VISIT TO JAPAN BY SECRETARY AND CLOSER COLLABORATION OF DOL AND MOL THROUGH PERIODIC MEETINGS. IF SECRETARY AND DOL AGREE IN PRINCIPLE TO FUTURE MEETINGS, MINISTER FUJII PLANS TO SUGGEST AS TWO POSSIBLE FRUITFUL FIELDS OF COLLABORATION THE DIVISION OF LABOR IN FUNDING RESEARCH ON OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES AND THE EXCHANGE OF DOL AND MOL PERSONNEL THROUGH SEVERAL MONTH-LONG INTERNSHIP PROGRAM.

2. AS REPORTED REFTEL, MINISTER WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE, SPECIAL ASSISTANT KOSHI KIKOCHI, AND INTER-
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NATIONAL AFFAIRS DIVISION LIAISON OFFICER MS. KIYOKO FUJII (WHO WILL SERVE AS INTERPRETER). PLEASE NOTE THAT MINISTER'S WIFE AND INTERPRETER HAVE IDENTICAL NAMES.

3. MRS. KIYOKO FUJII, MINISTER'S WIFE, BORN IN OKAYAMA PREFECTURE IN 1921 AND GRADUATED FROM KOBE JUNIOR COLLEGE. FUJII'S HAVE BEEN MARRIED FOR 33 YEARS AND HAVE ONE SON

(EMPLOYEE OF INDUSTRIAL BANK OF JAPAN) AND TWO DAUGHTERS (ONE OF WHOM IS MARRIED TO FINANCE MINISTRY OFFICIAL, OTHER IS UNMARRIED AND WORKS FOR BANK OF TOKYO). WHILE MRS. FUJII HAS VISITED EUROPE, THIS WILL BE HER FIRST TRIP TO U.S. SHE SPEAKS NO ENGLISH. SHE IS VERY INTERESTED IN THE ARTS, PARTICULARLY MUSIC. IN U.S., SHE IS ANXIOUS TO SEE UNSPOILED NATURE AS WELL AS EXAMPLES OF PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC SITES. WHILE JAPANESE EMBASSY MAY BE ARRANGING SIGHTSEEING PROGRAM FOR HER, SHE WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY ENJOY VISITING DAMBARTON OAKS AND/OR MOUNT VERNON.

4. SPECIAL ASSISTANT KOSHI KIKOCHI, BORN IN 1937 IN TOKYO, ENTERED MINISTRY IN 1961 AFTER GRADUATING FROM UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO LAW SCHOOL. HE HAS SERVED AS DIRECTOR OF FUKUOKA PREFECTURAL LABOR DEPARTMENT'S INSURANCE DIVISION AND EMPLOYMENT SECURITY DIVISION AND, IN THE MINISTRY, AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF TWO SEPARATE DIVISIONS OF THE LABOR STANDARD'S BUREAU WAGES AND WELFARE DEPARTMENT. THE POST OF SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE MINISTER IS USUALLY RESERVED FOR CAREER OFFICIALS IN THEIR LATE 30S WHO ARE REGARDED AS "COMERS" IN THE MINISTRY HEADED FOR THE TOP. KIKOCHI SPEAKS VERY LITTLE ENGLISH. HIS HOBBY IS GOLF.

5. LIAISON OFFICER MS. KIYOKO FUJII, BORN IN TOKYO IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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1940, ENTERED MINISTRY IN 1962 AFTER GRADUATING FROM INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY. SHE HAS SERVED IN THE MINISTRY'S WOMEN AND MINORS BUREAU, LABOR STANDARDS BUREAU AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING BUREAU (WHERE SHE WAS CHIEF OF THE BUREAU'S INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION SECTION). HER HUSBAND IS A CAREER OFFICIAL AT THE MINISTRY OF CONSTRUCTION AND SHE HAS ONE CHILD. AS THE FIRST JAPANESE WOMAN TO WIN AN EISENHOWER EXCHANGE FELLOWSHIP, SHE SPENT THE SPRING OF 1977 IN THE UNITED STATES STUDYING THE CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN IN U.S. SOCIETY. HER COMPREHENSION OF ENGLISH IS EXCELLENT BUT SINCE SHE HAS NOT BEEN TRAINED AS A PROFESSIONAL INTERPRETER, HER RENDITION OF JAPANESE INTO ENGLISH OCCASIONALLY LEAVES SOMETHING TO BE DESIRED. SHE IS PARTICULARLY FOND OF AMERICANS AND IS ONE OF THE FEW MIDDLE LEVEL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHO OFTEN INVITES FOREIGNERS TO HER HOME.

6. COMMENT: AS DOL OFFICIALS AWARE, MOL STAFF INITIALLY RELUCTANT TO INVOLVE MINISTER FUJII TOO DEEPLY WITH DOL BECAUSE OF THEIR CONCERN THAT HE TOO INEXPERIENCED IN LABOR MATTERS. THIS INITIAL RELUCTANCE HAS NOW BEEN OVERCOME. MOL OFFICIALS UP TO AND INCLUDING VICE MINISTER

FUJINAWA EXPRESS ENTHUSIASM ABOUT UPCOMING MEETING AND WELCOME OPPORTUNITY IT WILL PROVIDE TO ANNOUNCE FUTURE CONCERN. MOL ALSO HAS COME TO RECOGNIZE DESIRABILITY OF INVOLVING ITSELF MORE IN BILATERAL TRADE ISSUES ON GROUNDS THAT IT HAS MANDATE TO PROTECT INTEREST OF JAPANESE WORKERS. HOWEVER, BECAUSE MOL STAFF STILL WORRIED ABOUT MINISTER FUJII'S ABILITY TO EXPLAIN FULLY TECHNICAL ISSUES IN CONVERSATIONS WITH SECRETARY MARSHALL, IT NOW LEANING TOWARDS SENDING ASSISTANT SECRETARY LEVEL OFFICIAL WITH MINISTER. IF SUCH DECISION IS MADE, WE WILL FURNISH ADDITIONAL BIO INFO. MANSFILD

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